

LEARN ABOUT FREEMASONRY: HOW MANY US PRESIDENTS WERE FREEMASONS?

How many Presidents of the United States of America have been freemasons? It's a very popular question. The answer is fourteen, or fifteen if you include Lyndon B. Johnson, President 1963-1969, who was initiated into freemasonry in 1937 but never progressed beyond the first degree of Entered Apprentice. The rest, however, have had something of a more fruitful relationship with their lodges. Here are all those US Presidents in chronological order with the facts about their membership:

George Washington (1732-1799)

President 1789-1797

The first President was initiated in Fredericksburg Lodge, Virginia in 1752 aged 20. He joined Alexandria Lodge, Virginia in 1782 and laid the cornerstone of the Capitol Building, Washington in a masonic ceremony. **Discover more about Washington here**.

James Monroe (1758-1831)

President 1817-1825

During the War of Independence, eighteen-year-old James Monroe was initiated into St. John's Regimental Lodge, Continental Army in 1775. He later joined of a lodge in Williamsburg, Virginia.

Andrew Jackson (1767-1845)

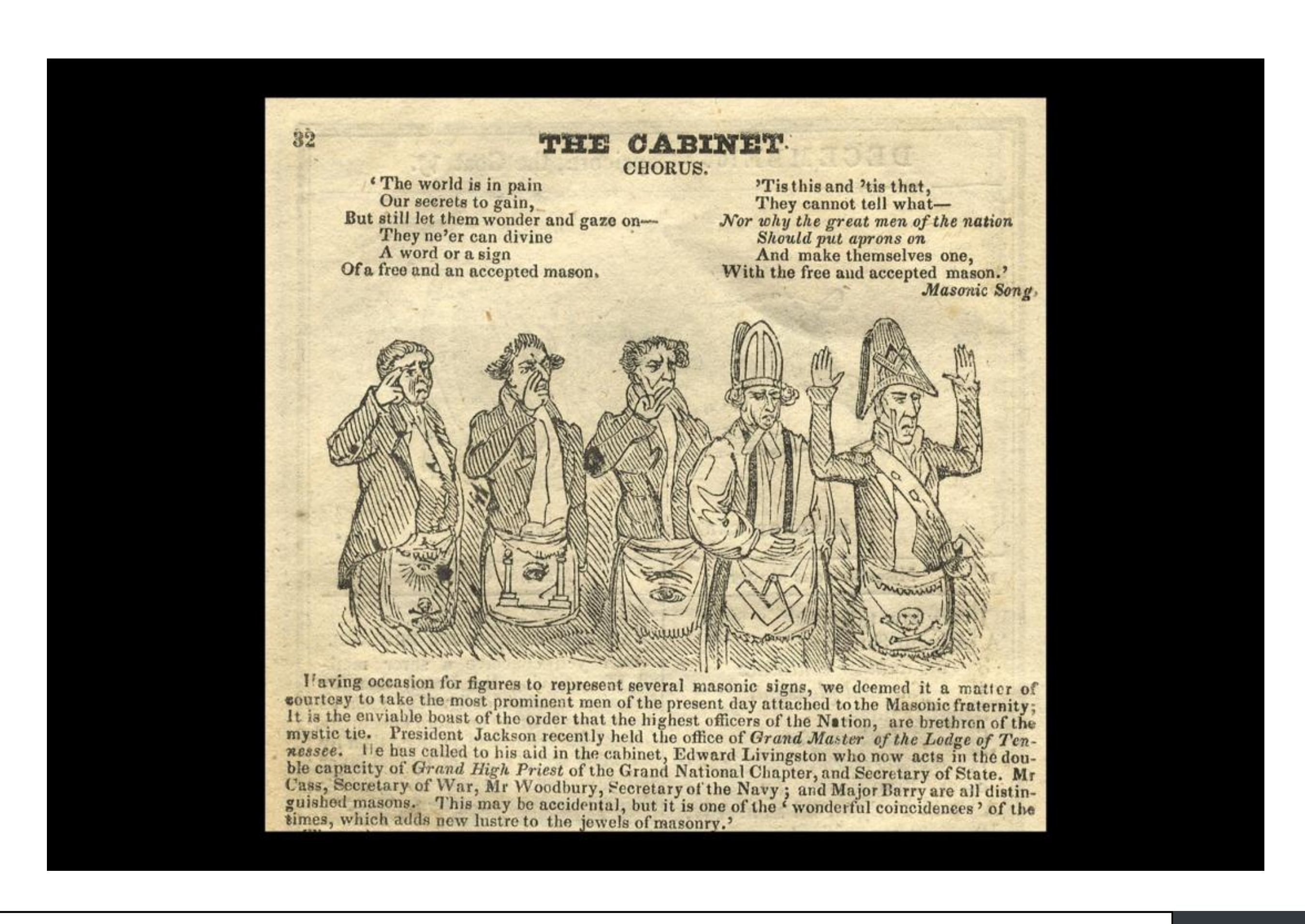
President 1829-1837

Before he was President, Jackson was Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Tennessee from 1822-1824, having been made a freemason in Nashville. During his presidency, an opposition movement called the Anti-Masonic Party nearly brought down freemasonry in the United States.

James Knox Polk (1795-1849)

President 1845-1849

Like Andrew Jackson, Polk was a Tennessee freemason, having been initiated in Columbia Lodge No. 21, Columbia in 1820.



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THE CABINET.

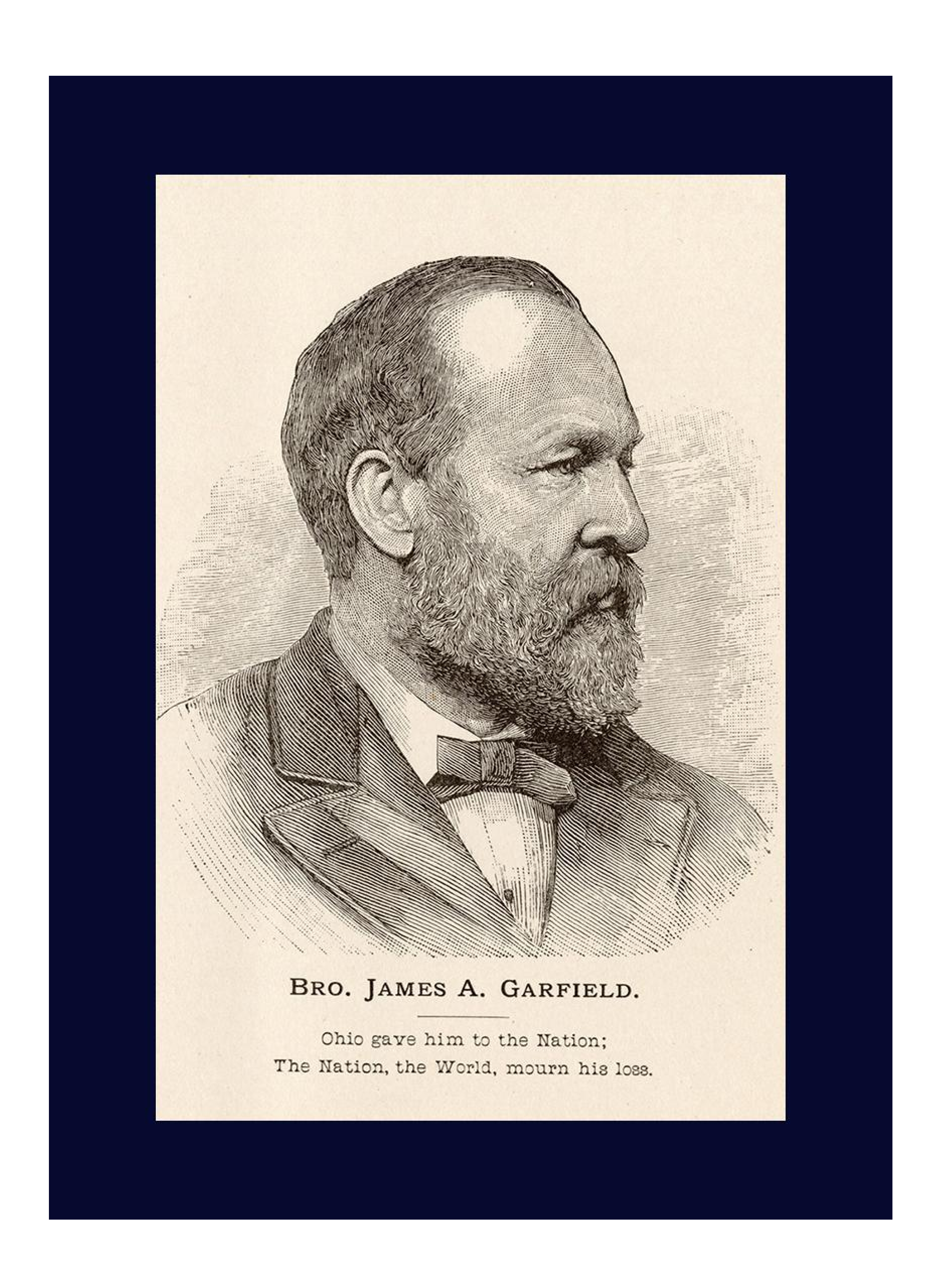
CHORUS.

'The world is in pain
Our secrets to gain,
But still let them wonder and gaze on—
They ne'er can divine
A word or a sign
Of a free and an accepted mason.

'Tis this and 'tis that,
They cannot tell what—
Nor why the great men of the nation
Should put aprons on
And make themselves one,
With the free and accepted mason.'

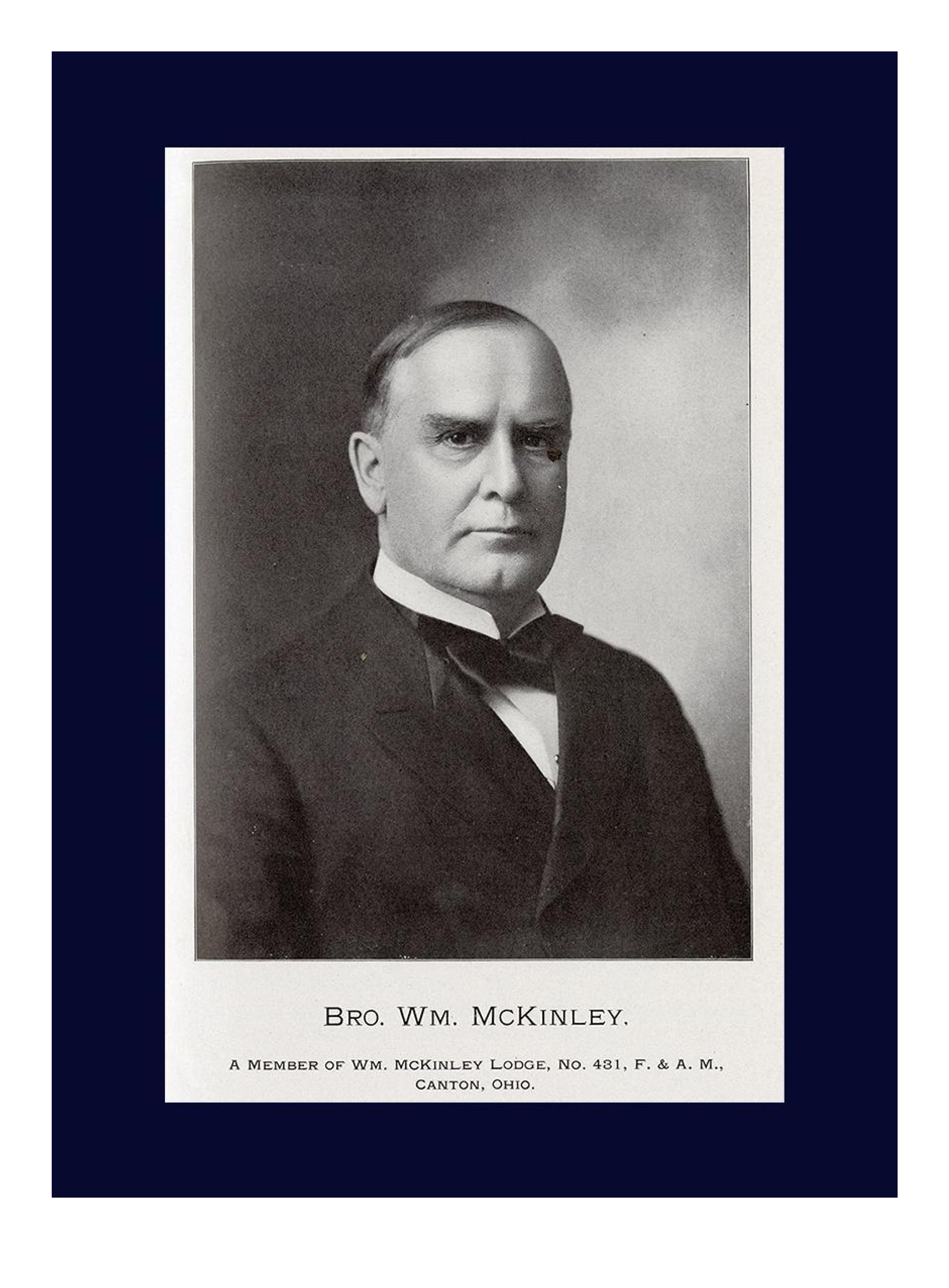
Masonic Song.

Having occasion for figures to represent several masonic signs, we deemed it a matter of courtesy to take the most prominent men of the present day attached to the Masonic fraternity; It is the enviable boast of the order that the highest officers of the Nation, are brethren of the mystic tie. President Jackson recently held the office of *Grand Master of the Lodge of Tennessee.* He has called to his aid in the cabinet, Edward Livingston who now acts in the double capacity of *Grand High Priest* of the Grand National Chapter, and Secretary of State. Mr Cass, Secretary of War, Mr Woodbury, Secretary of the Navy; and Major Barry are all distinguished masons. This may be accidental, but it is one of the 'wonderful coincidences' of the times, which adds new lustre to the jewels of masonry.'



BRO. JAMES A. GARFIELD.

Ohio gave him to the Nation;
The Nation, the World, mourn his loss.



James Buchanan (1791-1868)

President 1857-1861

The fifteenth President had been the Deputy District Grand Master under the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania in 1824. He was initiated in Lodge No. 43, in Lancaster under the same Grand Lodge in 1816.

Andrew Johnson (1808-1875)

President 1865-1869

Johnson was the third President to have been initiated in Tennessee after Jackson and Polk, having been made a freemason in Greenville Lodge No. 119 in 1851.

James Abram Garfield (1831-1881)

President 1881

Tragically assassinated in the first year of his presidency, James Garfield had been a serving Union officer during the Civil War. Initiated in Magnolia Lodge, Ohio in 1861, his progress was hindered by the war but he joined several lodges in Ohio and later in the District of Columbia when he became a Congressman.

William McKinley (1843-1901)

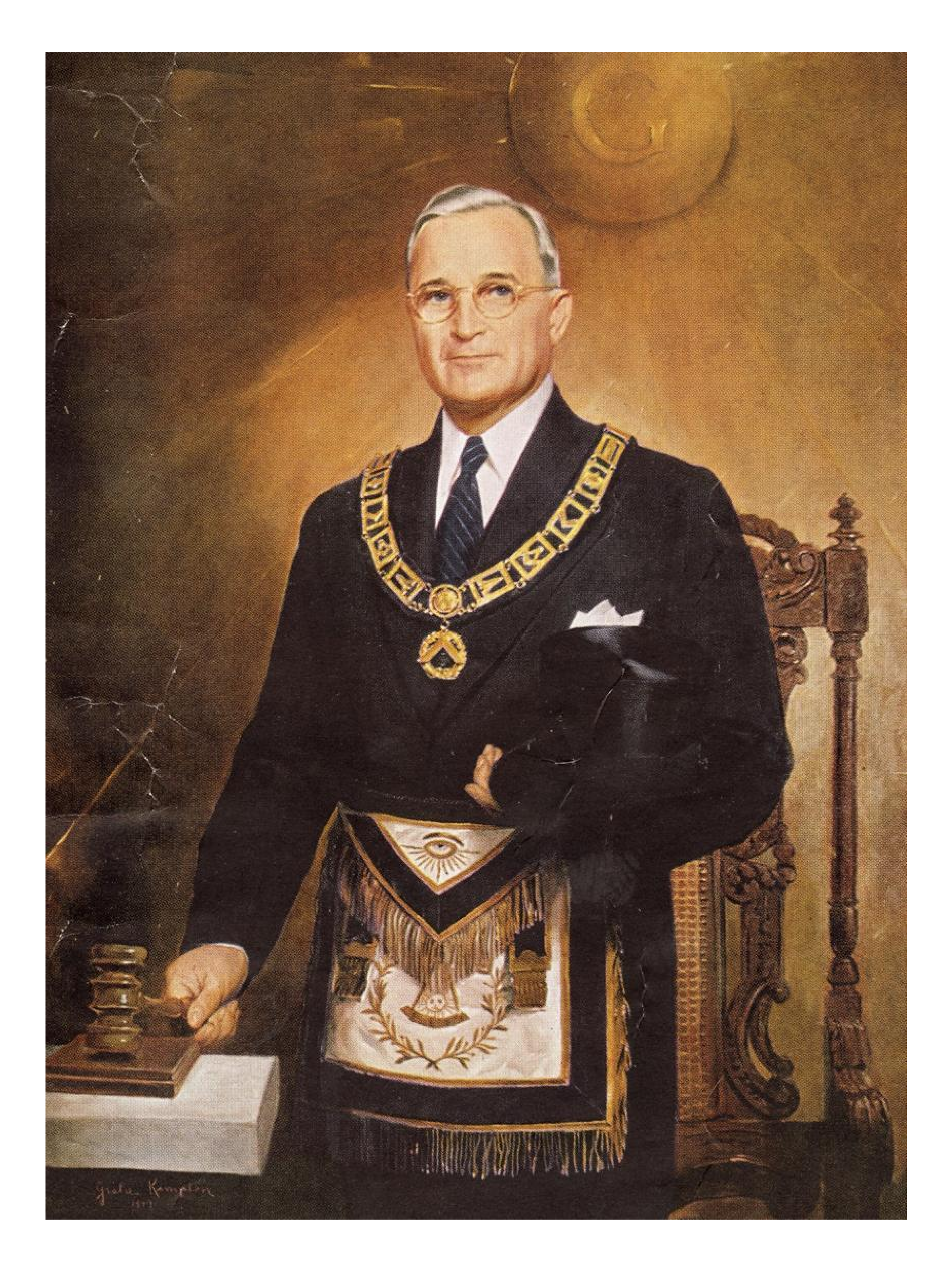
President 1897-1901

As a Union officer during the Civil War, McKinley was initiated into freemasonry in a Confederate lodge in Winchester, Virginia, after witnessing a Union doctor and freemason helping Confederate prisoners. He was a founder member of Eagle Lodge in Canton, Ohio, which changed its name to William McKinley Lodge after he was assassinated in 1901.

Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919)

President 1901-1909

Vice-President Teddy Roosevelt unexpectedly became President in 1901 after the assassination of William McKinley. A few months earlier he had been made a freemason in Matinecock Lodge in Oyster Bay, New York and continued attending lodges throughout his presidency. He was famously photographed as a Master Mason in Spokane Lodge, Washington State.





William Howard Taft (1857-1930)

President 1909-1913

In 1909, the year he became President, William Taft was made a 'mason at sight' at a special ceremony by the Grand Master of Ohio in Kilwinning Lodge, Cincinnati. Making a 'mason on sight' is a privilege exercised by Grand Masters of some US Grand Lodges, in which a candidate receives the first three degrees of freemasonry in one event.

Warren Gamaliel Harding (1865-1923)

President 1921-1923

The fourth freemason president from Ohio, Harding had been initiated in Marion Lodge, Ohio in 1901 but after a dispute with lodge members, did not become a

Master Mason until 1920. He died in office in 1923.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945)

President 1933-1945

America's longest serving President became a freemason in Holland Lodge, New York in 1911 and remained an active freemason for the rest of his life. In 1935 he presided over Architect Lodge, New York, when his sons Elliot and Franklin Delano Jr were made Master Masons in their own right.

Harry Truman (1884-1972)

President 1945-1952

Roosevelt's Vice-President and successor, Harry Truman, had been initiated in Belton Lodge, Missouri in 1909 and clocked up over fifty years in freemasonry. Active in many orders of freemasonry, he was elected the ninety-seventh Grand Master of Missouri in 1941.

Gerald Rudolph Ford (1931-2006)

President 1974-1977

So far, Gerald Rudolph Ford, is the last Presidential Master Mason. He was initiated in Malta Lodge, Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1949 but was raised a Master Mason in Columbia Lodge, Washington, DC.

Some books and websites claim that Thomas Jefferson, third President and James Madison, fourth President were freemasons. However as we can only go by documentary evidence, this is the list that remains historically accurate today.

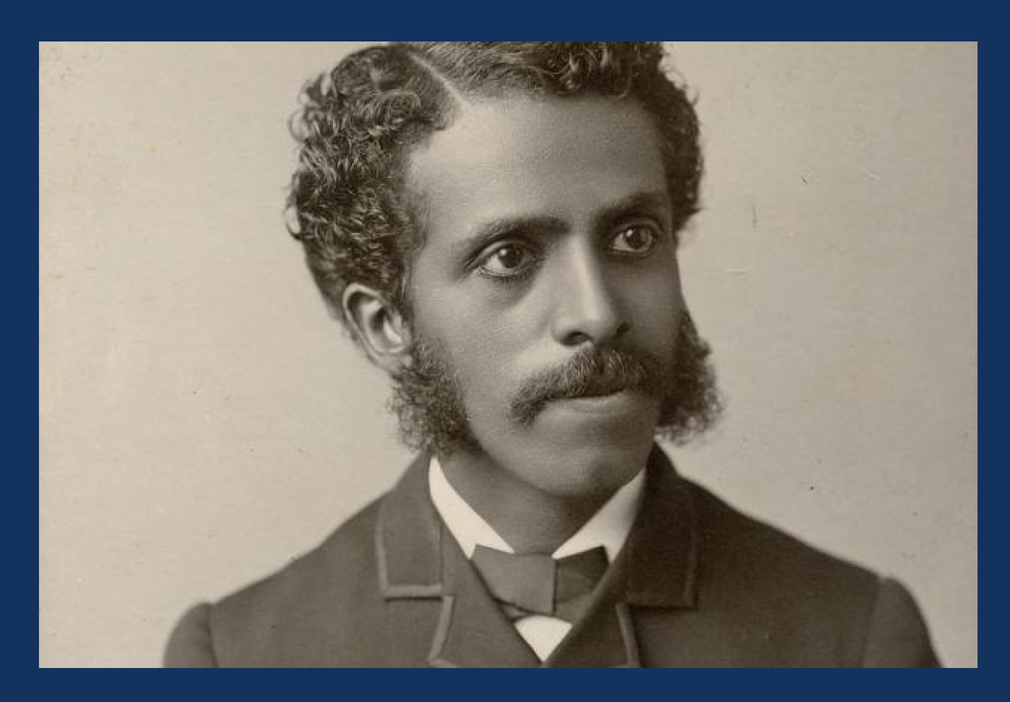
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